

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 121654Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7369
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 03289

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, OTRA, MASS, XA, GE, AO
SUBJECT: GDR MILITARY CHIEF VISITS GUINEA, NIGERIA
AND ANGOLA

REFS: (A) BERLIN 3099 (NOTAL); (B) BRAZZAVILLE 550
- (NOTAL)

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1. SUMMARY: GDR MINISTER OF DEFENSE HOFFMANN,
LEADING A HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DELEGATION, HAS VISITED
GUINEA, AND ANGOLA AND, BRIEFLY, NIGERIA. THERE
HAVE BEEN NO ANNOUNCEMENTS OF ANY SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS
RESULTING FROM THESE VISITS INVOLVING MILITARY
SUPPLIES, TRAINING OR OTHERWISE. THE VISITS, HOWEVER,

HAVE CLEARLY SERVED THE POLITICAL PURPOSE OF REAFFIRMING GDR SUPPORT FOR THE REGIMES IN ANGOLA AND GUINEA AND ITS INTERESTS IN THE AREA. END SUMMARY.

2. GDR MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND MEMBER OF THE SED POLITBURO HOFFMANN LEAD A DELEGATION TO GUINEA MAY 2 TO 6. THE GDR DELEGATION INCLUDED DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND CHIEF OF REAR SERVICES, POPPE, AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE AND THE AIR DEFENSE COMMAND, REINHOLD. HOFFMANN MET WITH PRESIDENT SEKOU TOURE, PRIME MINISTER LANSANA BEAVOGUI, MINISTER OF THE ARMY KOUROUMA, AND CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF CONDE.

3. DURING THE COURSE OF OFFICIAL TALKS IN CONAKRY, AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS HERE, BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED THEIR SATISFACTION AT THE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GDR AND GUINEA. HOFFMANN PLEDGED THE GDR'S CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR GUINEA AND CONVEYED HONECKER'S GREETINGS TO TOURE.

4. ON LEAVING GUINEA, THE EAST GERMAN DELEGATION MADE A BRIEF STOP-OVER IN LAGOS WHERE THERE WAS A MEETING WITH NIGERIAN CHIEF OF STAFF BRIGADIER ERONOBOR. THE TWO SIDES DISCUSSED "FURTHER POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATION."
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5. GENERAL HOFFMANN AND HIS ENTOURAGE PROCEEDED TO ANGOLA WHERE THEY STAYED MAY 6 TO 11. THE GDR DELEGATION MET WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND POLITBURO MEMBER CARREIRA AND, ON THEIR LAST DAY IN LUANDA, WITH PRESIDENT NETO. THE GROUP ALSO VISITED SOUTHERN ANGOLA (THE HUILA, MOCAMEDES, AND HUAMBO PROVINCES) WHERE HOFFMANN REPORTEDLY MET WITH PROVINCIAL COMMISSARS AND THE CHIEFS OF THE SOUTH AND CENTRAL MILITARY REGIONS.

6. IN A PRESS STATEMENT ON HIS ARRIVAL AT LUANDA, HOFFMANN EMPHASIZED THE "TRADITIONAL RELATIONS OF ANTI-IMPERIALIST SOLIDARITY" BETWEEN THE SED AND THE MPLA-LABOR PARTY AS WELL AS THE PEOPLE OF BOTH COUNTRIES. THE VISIT OF THE GDR MILITARY DELEGATION, HE SAID, WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF THESE RELATIONS AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE ARMED BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN THE EAST GERMAN ARMY AND THE FAPLA-PEOPLE'S ARMY OF ANGOLA. HOFFMANN CONDEMNED THE RECENT ATTACK ON ANGOLA FROM SOUTH AFRICA. DURING THE TALKS CARREIRA ACKNOWLEDGED

THE MATERIAL HELP PROVIDED BY THE GDR DURING THE
"LIBERATION STRUGGLE," THE POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC
SUPPORT GIVEN BY THE GDR AND THE CLOSE TIES WITH
THE PEOPLE, PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OF EAST GERMANY.
HOFFMANN TOLD CARREIRA THAT THE GDR CONTINUES
TO SUPPORT THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA
AND STANDS ON THE SIDE OF LIBERATION FORCES.
HOFFMANN REPORTEDLY TOLD NETO THAT THE EAST GERMAN
ARMY WOULD REMAIN IN "UNBREAKABLE SOLIDARITY" WITH
ANGOLA. NETO IN TURN ASSURED HOFFMANN THAT ANGOLA

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WOULD CONTINUE ITS SOCIALIST ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT.

7. WHILE IN HUAMBO, HOFFMANN MET WITH THE

PROVINCIAL COMMISSAR, PEDRO MARIA TONHA, IN THE
"FORMER STRONGHOLD OF THE PRO-IMPERIALIST TERROR
ORGANIZATION UNITA." TONHA PRAISED THE INTERNATIONAL
SOLIDARITY OF THE SOVIET UNION, CUBA, THE GDR AND
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OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. HOFFMANN STATED THAT
THE GDR AND ITS ARMY TOGETHER WITH THE USSR
AND OTHER SOCIALIST STATES AND THEIR ARMIES WOULD
CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA, THE
MPLA-LABOR PARTY AND THE FAPLA-ARMY. GENERAL
POPPE DECORATED AN ANGOLA ARMY BRIGADE AND THE EAST
GERMANS MET WITH SOVIET AND CUBAN TEACHERS AND
ADVISERS AT THE OFFICER SCHOOL "NICOLAU GOMEZ
SPENCER" IN HUAMBO.

8. COMMENT: ON THE BASIS OF REPORTS PUBLISHED
HERE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO SAY WHETHER MILITARY
ASSISTANCE WAS DISCUSSED DURING THE TALKS HELD SO
FAR. NO AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED BUT
THAT WOULD NOT BE EXPECTED IN ANY CASE. ON THE
POLITICAL LEVEL, THE TRIP REPRESENTS A STRONG
REAFFIRMATION OF GDR SUPPORT FOR THE REGIME IN
CONADRY AND EVEN MORE SO FOR THE REGIME IN LUANDA.
THE GDR HAS FOR YEARS CULTIVATED CLOSE
TIES WITH THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, OR AT LEAST
SOME OF THEM, IN THE FORMER PORTUGUESE COLONIES.
WITH INDEPENDENCE THESE PARTY TIES HAVE EVOLVED
INTO OFTEN STRONG STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS AS WELL,
ENTAILING, PROBABLY EXTENSIVE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE.
EAST GERMANY'S INTEREST IN THIS AREA HAS BEEN
OVERSHADOWED IN RECENT MONTHS BY ITS SEEMING
PREOCCUPATION WITH THE HORN OF AFRICA. THE TRIP
BY THIS VERY HIGH-RANKING MILITARY DELEGATION IS
A CLEAR INDICATION THAT ITS INTERESTS IN WESTERN
AFRICA ARE UNDIMINISHED. WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS
PROBABLE THAT ONE REASON FOR THIS
RENEWED EMPHASIS ON GDR INTERESTS IN THIS PART OF
AFRICA AT THIS TIME HAS TO DO WITH THE GDR'S
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EQUALLY STRONG CONCERNS WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN
NAMIBIA. END COMMENT. BOLEN

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